

US EPA RECORDS CENTER REGION 5



457250

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
 POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT  
 Acme Galvanizing - Removal Polrep  
 Initial and Final Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
 Region V

**Subject:**

**POLREP #1**  
**Initial/Final**  
**Acme Galvanizing**

**Milwaukee, WI**  
**Latitude: 42.9942840 Longitude: -87.9361750**

**To:**

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**From:**

Kathy Halbur, OSC

**Date:**

3/18/2015

**Reporting Period:**

3/16/2015-3/18/2015

**1. Introduction****1.1 Background**

<b>Site Number:</b>	C56G	<b>Contract Number:</b>	
<b>D.O. Number:</b>		<b>Action Memo Date:</b>	
<b>Response Authority:</b>	CERCLA	<b>Response Type:</b>	Emergency
<b>Response Lead:</b>	PRP	<b>Incident Category:</b>	Removal Action
<b>NPL Status:</b>	Non NPL	<b>Operable Unit:</b>	
<b>Mobilization Date:</b>	3/16/2015	<b>Start Date:</b>	3/16/2015
<b>Demob Date:</b>	3/17/2015	<b>Completion Date:</b>	3/18/2015
<b>CERCLIS ID:</b>		<b>RCRIS ID:</b>	
<b>ERNS No.:</b>	NRC#1110783	<b>State Notification:</b>	WI SPILL #9016 & 9018
<b>FPN#:</b>		<b>Reimbursable Account #:</b>	

**1.1.1 Incident Category**

Emergency Response

**1.1.2 Site Description**

At 0750 on 3/16/15, a 100 pound propane cylinder exploded while being filled at Acme Galvanizing, 2730 S. 19th St., Milwaukee, WI. The explosion resulted in a two-alarm fire. Ferrel Gas reported the explosion to the National Response Center (NRC# 1110783) and to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Spill Hotline (WI Spill #9018). At 0931, the Milwaukee Fire Department (MFD) reported concerns of a subsequent sulfuric acid release to WDNR (WI Spill #9016). At the request of WDNR, EPA On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) Halbur mobilized to the scene with WDNR Regional Spills Coordinator (RSC) Mueller to investigate potential threats to public health and the environment.

**1.1.2.1 Location**

Acme Galvanizing, 2730 S. 19th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53234

**1.1.2.2 Description of Threat & Preliminary Assessment Results**

Fire suppression water pooled in two areas: an exterior loading dock on the northeast corner of the facility and inside the building in the area impacted by the fire. The fire destroyed Acme's Maintenance Shop and their on-site laboratory. The water outside had a greenish tint, leading MFD to initially suspect a sulfuric acid release.

When clearing the building after the fire was extinguished, MFD Hazmat identified areas in the eastern portion of the facility with hydrogen cyanide (HCN) concentrations greater than 50 ppm. The elevated HCN concentrations were contained within the fire impacted area and appeared to be directly related to

the contaminated water pool. MFD Hazmat confirmed the cyanide storage area and the cyanide plating lines were not significantly impacted by the fire and not the source of the HCN emissions.

MFD conducted perimeter and off-site air monitoring to verify there were no elevated readings beyond the fire scene.

## 2. Current Activities

### 2.1 Operations Section

#### 2.1.1 Response Actions to Date

Acme immediately hired Advanced Waste Services (AW) to collect and dispose of the contaminated water. AW collected a sample of the water contained in the loading dock and conducted a rush analysis at their facility's laboratory in Milwaukee. AW determined that the loading dock water had a neutral pH and did not contain cyanide or metals. It is believed the green coloring was caused by "Green Dye 5", a dye used by Acme to identify parts during processing. A shipment of the dye was recently received by Acme and was stored in the area of the fire. MFD Hazmat also collected a sample of the water in the loading dock. EPA is analyzing this sample; results are pending. AW mobilized a vac truck to collect the water in the loading dock, however shortly before the truck's arrival, the drain plug (ice) in the loading dock gave way, releasing approximately 3,500 gallons of the contained water to the Kinnickinnic River, which borders the facility to the east. EPA, WDNR, MFD Hazmat, and AW all immediately assessed the outfall, but there was no way to contain or capture the water due to the speed of the discharge and the flow of the River. The river channel is concrete in that location. No adverse impacts to the river (e.g., fish) have been observed or reported to date. AW collected the water that remained in the loading dock and pressure washed the loading dock. Approximately 400 gallons of water from this area was transported to AW's treatment facility on McKinley Avenue (Manifest#012980034JJK).

Acme attempted to hire an environmental contractor to conduct air monitoring, but was unable to secure HCN monitoring capabilities until 3/17/15. EPA mobilized its START contractor, Tetra Tech, to assist with air monitoring in the interim. MFD Hazmat remained on-site and continued to conduct air monitoring until START arrived. During the MFD/START joint entry to transition air monitoring, the MFD and START HCN monitors were not providing consistent readings (i.e., EPA meter was reading lower than MFD's meters). Deferring to the higher readings, access to the facility was prohibited until the area could be reassessed with additional meters. Arrangements were made for the 54th Civil Support Team (CST) and MFD Hazmat to remobilize with EPA and WDNR at 0830 on 3/17/15. START conducted air monitoring at the facility overnight to immediately identify if any off-site releases occurred. An Acme representative was also on-site overnight for site security. Additionally, Acme and START monitored the facility's wastewater treatment plant and hot spots throughout the night.

During the overnight hours, START was able to mobilize their response vehicle to the Site. This brought five additional meters with HCN sensors. A set of Area Raes were deployed at 0800 on 3/17/15; meters were located at the eastern and western fence lines, in Acme's office, and in the wastewater treatment room. All meters consistently indicated no HCN in these areas. MFD Hazmat and START then conducted a joint entry (CST provided safety/rescue team support) to reassess the fire impacted area as well as the cyanide storage and plating areas. Each agency's HCN meters, as well as a meter obtained by Acme's industrial hygiene contractor, Sigma, were utilized during the entry to ensure consistent and accurate meter readings. The HCN concentrations were determined to be low enough to proceed with contaminated water collection in the impacted area (less than 10 ppm) and all meters were determined to be reading consistently. MFD Hazmat and CST demobilized. AW containerized the contaminated water in a vac box and pressure washed the floor in the impacted area. START conducted air monitoring during the removal activities; all of which was conducted in Level B PPE. AW collected a sample of the containerized water (approximately 500 gallons) to establish a waste profile and make disposal plans.

WDNR identified green water remaining in the storm sewer outfall. AW flushed the sewer and collected approximately 300 gallons from the outfall; this water was taken to AW's facility on McKinley St. for treatment (Manifest 012980035JJK).

#### 2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)

Ferrel Gas and Acme Galvanizing are PRPs. Acme Galvanizing authorized all cleanup activities during EPA's mobilization.

#### 2.1.4 Progress Metrics

Waste Stream	Quantity	Manifest #	Disposal Facility
Wastewater	700 gallons	012980034JJK 012980035JJK	Advanced Waste, McKinley Ave, Milwaukee, WI
CN Wastewater	500 gallons	TBD	TBD

### 2.2 Planning Section

#### 2.2.1 Anticipated Activities & Next Steps

EPA and START demobilized on 3/17/15. Acme resumed manufacturing operations on 3/18/15, with the impacted area cordoned off and access strictly restricted. Acme hired Sigma to act as the Safety Officer and to conduct air monitoring during the Cause and Origin Investigation and the subsequent cleanup. A structural engineer has been retained to evaluate the building. The Milwaukee Department of Neighborhood Services planned to conduct an inspection on 3/18/15. WDNR will oversee the remaining cleanup activities. EPA will provide technical assistance, if needed.

#### 2.2.2 Issues

HCN meters were not readily available in the private sector, thereby necessitating the need for MFD, CST, and EPA air monitoring to assess and stabilize the scene. The source of HCN emissions in the fire area was never conclusively determined; the known cyanide stored and used at the facility was secure and the reaction was inconsistent with the reported chemicals and quantities in the facility's lab.

The cleanup contractor's vac truck was not able to mobilize to the site in time to collect the water in the loading dock resulting in a release to the Kinnickinnic River.

### 2.3 Logistics Section

START response (personnel and equipment) was initially limited due to the numerous simultaneous ERs in the Region.

### 2.4 Finance Section

Acme Galvanizing assumed financial responsibility during the emergency phase of the response.

#### Estimated Costs \*

	Budgeted	Total To Date	Remaining	% Remaining
<b>Extramural Costs</b>				
TAT/START	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	100.00%
<b>Intramural Costs</b>				

<b>Total Site Costs</b>	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	100.00%

\* The above accounting of expenditures is an estimate based on figures known to the OSC at the time this report was written. The OSC does not necessarily receive specific figures on final payments made to any contractor(s). Other financial data which the OSC must rely upon may not be entirely up-to-date. The cost accounting provided in this report does not necessarily represent an exact monetary figure which the government may include in any claim for cost recovery.

## 2.5 Other Command Staff

MFD, WDNR, EPA, and CST operated in Unified Command.  
MHD and WDHS provided technical support remotely.

## 3. Participating Entities

Milwaukee Fire Department  
Milwaukee Health Department  
Milwaukee Department of Neighborhood Services  
Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewer District  
Milwaukee County Emergency Management  
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
Wisconsin Department of Health Services  
54th Civil Support Team

## 4. Personnel On Site

EPA: 1  
START: 3 (2 day time operations; 1 night operations)

## 5. Definition of Terms

AW: Advanced Waste  
CST: Civil Support Team  
MFD: Milwaukee Fire Department  
MHD: Milwaukee Health Department  
OSC: On-Scene Coordinator  
RSC: Regional Spills Coordinator  
WDNR: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

## 6. Additional sources of information

### 6.1 Internet location of additional information/report

[www.epaossc.org/acmegalvanizinginc](http://www.epaossc.org/acmegalvanizinginc)

### 6.2 Reporting Schedule

This is the Final POLREP.

## 7. Situational Reference Materials

### Regional Metrics

This is an Integrated River Assessment. The numbers should overlap.

Miles of river systems cleaned and/or restored	<1
Cubic yards of contaminated sediments removed and/or capped	0
Gallons of oil/water recovered	300
Acres of soil/sediment cleaned up in floodplains and riverbanks	0
Number of contaminated residential yards cleaned up	0
Number of workers on site	100
cyanide, chromium	

### Oil Response Tracking

Estimated volume	Initial amount released	NA
	Final amount collected	NA
	FPN Ceiling Amount	NA
	FPN Number	NA
CANAPS Info	Body of Water affected	Kinnickinnic River

### Administrative and Logistical Factors (Place X where applicable)

Precedent-Setting HQ Consultations (e.g., fracking, asbestos)	X	Community challenges or high involvement	Radiological
X More than one PRP		Endangered Species Act / Essential Fish Habitat issues	X Explosives
AOC		Historic preservation issues	Residential impacts
UAO		NPL site	Relocation
DOJ involved		Remote location	Drinking water impacted
Criminal Investigation Division involved		Extreme weather or abnormal field season	X Environmental justice
Tribal consultation or coordination or other issues		Congressional involvement	X High media interest
Statutory Exemption for \$2 Million		Statutory Exemption for 1 Year	X Active fire present
X Hazmat Entry Conducted – Level A, B or C	X	Incident or Unified Command established	Actual air release (not threatened)

<b>Green Metrics</b>		
<b>Metric</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Units</b>
Diesel Fuel Used	NA (PRP)	gallons
Unleaded Fuel Used	NA (PRP)	gallons
Alternative/E-85 Fuel Used	NA (PRP)	gallons
Electricity from Coal	NA (PRP)	kW
Electricity from solar/wind	NA (PRP)	kW
Electricity from grid/mix	NA (PRP)	kW
Solid waste used	NA (PRP)	
Solid waste recycled	NA (PRP)	